THE MORTON ARBORETUM

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EXPLORING FROST HILL

Frost Hill, named by Arboretum grounds personnel because of its cold, windswept location, has another distinction, that of being the highest point topographically within the Arboretum limits. Prior to 1934 when the first plantings were made on this hilltop to provide an appropriate termination to the main axis of the newly established Hedge Garden, both it and the surrounding area were included in the Arboretum farming operation and planted to the usual rotation of agricultural crops.

Siberian Elm (*Ulmus pumila*) was the first deciduous tree species planted on the hill, not only to give a quick landscape effect but also to shelter the douglas fir, norway spruce and other conifers planted to provide the permanent cover. The growth of this initial planting was so successful that additional material was added from year to year—pines, more spruce, some firs, larch, hawthorns, crabapples and other miscellaneous genera. Today, some twenty-seven years later, the hill presents an entirely different and more mature aspect. Fifty foot elms and forty foot conifers not only emphasize the topographic variation of the site but fittingly terminate the hedge garden axis in the manner intended.

A hike around Frost Hill will reveal a surprising collection of unusual plants, some already well established, others recently planted. Located either beneath the taller conifers, or in sheltered bays along the outer perimeter of the plantings, they are in both instances furnished with necessary shade in varying degrees as well as protection from strong winds. These factors, coupled with good soil and perfect drainage provided by a field tile line underlying the area, are largely responsible for the success of the project. The fact that snow tends to remain on the north slopes is also significant.

While it is not feasible at this time to include a complete inventory of the introduced plants found on Frost Hill, some of the most noteworthy representatives are cited here for the benefit of those interested in seeking them out.

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Abies alba, Silver Fir; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden; 5 foot bushy specimen.

Abies balsamea, Balsam Fir; north side of road, east of Hedge Garden termination; newly planted.

**Abies cilicica,* Cilician Fir; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; 6 foot specimen.

**Abies concolor pyramidalis,* Pyramidal White Fir; west side of North-South axis leading north from Hedge Garden termination; two shapely specimens.

Abies firma, Momi Fir; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; 6 foot specimen

Abies fraseri, Fraser Fir; among conifers north and east of Hedge Garden termination.

Abies holophylla, Manchurian Fir; east of North-South axis leading north from Hedge Garden termination; two specimens 10 to 12 feet tall.

Abies homolepis, Nikko Fir; same location as above; 25 foot specimen.

Abies lasiocarpa arizonica 'Blue Form'; north edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; a small bushy specimen with silvery blue foliage.

**Abies nobilis glauca,* Noble Fir; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; very attractive small, bushy fir with silvery gray needles.

Abies nordmanniana, Nordmann Fir; east of North-South axis leading north from Hedge Garden termination; several specimens, the largest about 25 feet in height.

Abies veitchi, Veitch Fir; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; three 15 foot specimens.

**Acer campestre austriacum,* Austrian Hedge Maple; extreme east end of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; a number of good sized bushy specimens.

Acer davidi, David Maple; in bay on north side of meadow east of Hedge Garden termination; two 3½ foot specimens.

**Acer griseum,* Paperbark Maple; same location as above; a promising 6 foot specimen.

**Acer pseudoplatanus spaethi,* Spaeth Sycamore Maple; north side of path leading east through plantings at termination of Hedge Garden axis; a promising 6 foot specimen.

**Acer tegmentosum,* Manchustripe Maple; in bay on north side of meadow east of Hedge Garden termination; a healthy 5 foot specimen.

Berberis Julianae, Wintergreen Barberry; south side of path through conifer planting east of termination of Hedge Garden axis.

Castanea mollissima, Chinese Chestnut; north side of conifer planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; a multiple-trunked 30 foot specimen.

Cedrus atlantica glauca, Blue Atlas Cedar; north side of path through conifer planting east of termination of Hedge Garden axis; a plant 18 inches high, 2½ feet across; top in poor condition.

Cedrus libani, Cedar of Lebanon; among conifers north of maples; an ailing 2 foot plant.

**Cephalotaxus drupacea,* Japanese Plum-Yew; south side of path through conifer planting east of termination of Hedge Garden axis; a 5 foot bushy-topped, wide-spreading specimen.

Cephalotaxus drupacea sinensis, Chinese Plum-Yew; south side of path through conifer planting east of termination of Hedge Garden axis; three plants 1 foot tall and 2½ feet across.

**Cercis chinensis,* Chinese Redbud; west edge of small meadow east of termination of Hedge Garden axis; a bushy 4 foot specimen.

Chamaecyparis lawsoniana, Lawson Falsecypress; in sheltered bay east of planting island east side of Frost Hill Loop; an 8 foot specimen.

Cornus kousa chinensis, Chinese Kousa Dogwood; south side of Frost Hill; a bushy 4 foot specimen; dead tip growth evident throughout the plant, however.

*Good specimen

**Cotinus americanus,* American Smoketree; south side of Frost Hill Loop north of Prunus Collection; three well shaped specimens.

Cryptomeria japonica, Japanese Cryptomeria; beneath conifers in second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; a poor specimen.

Daphne mezereum, February Daphne; beneath conifers directly east of Hedge Garden terminus; a self sown plant.

Enkianthus campanulatus, Redvein Enkianthus; in specially prepared acid soil bed south side of Frost Hill Road, opposite spruce planting; two small plants in poor condition.

**Eucommia ulmoides,* Hardy Rubber Tree; area west of Pyramidal Tree Group; two good sized specimens, one a multiple-trunked tree 15 feet tall.

Fagus sylvatica, European Beech; in sheltered bay along south side of meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus; one 5 foot and one 7 foot specimen in good condition.

**Fagus sylvatica atropunicea* 'Copper', Copper Beech; same location as above; a bushy 8 foot tree in excellent condition.

Fagus sylvatica atropunicea 'Riversi', Rivers Purple Beech; same location as above; a 6 foot tree in fair condition.

Fagus sylvatica rotundifolia, Roundleaf European Beech; same location as above; two small trees in fair condition.

Fagus sylvatica zlatia, Golden European Beech; same location as above; a small, fairly presentable specimen.

**Fontanesia fortunei,* Fortune Fontanesia; north-east edge of Frost Hill, opposite the Metasequoias; a group of plants 12 to 15 feet tall.

Halesia monticola, Mountain Silverbell; along south side of Frost Hill Road west of the acid soil group; a poor specimen, and another farther east is no better.

**Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Nikko Blue', Nikko Blue Bigleaf Hydrangea; in specially prepared acid soil bed south side of Frost Hill Road opposite the spruce planting; two established plants in good condition, two newly planted smaller ones.

Ilex opaca 'Canary', Canary Yellowfruit Holly; Holly Collection; several recently planted specimens.

**Ilex opaca* 'Hedgeholly', Bosley Hedgeholly; Holly Collection; a dense, bushy 6 foot specimen.

**Ilex opaca* 'Old Heavy Berry', Old Heavy Berry Holly; Holly Collection; two bushy, 4 to 5 foot fruiting specimens.

Ilex opaca 'Santa Claus', Santa Claus Holly; Holly Collection; newly planted.

Ilex opaca 'Yule', Yule Holly; Holly Collection; two specimens, one 6 feet in height, one 4 feet.

Ilex opaca, Bosley IB, American Holly selection; Holly Collection; two newly planted specimens.

Juglans regia, English (Persian) Walnut; west edge of small meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus; a healthy 4½ foot specimen.

**Juniperus communis hibernica,* Irish Juniper; bordering small meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus; several groups of shapely specimens of various size.

Koelreuteria paniculata, Goldenrain Tree; east edge of planting at termination of Hedge Garden axis; a small plant.

Laburnum anagyroides, Common Laburnum, Goldenchain; along south side of Frost Hill Road, west of bed of broad-leaved evergreens; a 6 foot bushy, multiple-stemmed plant.

**Laburnum vossi,* Voss Laburnum; same location as above; a single trunked 8 foot tree in fair condition.

Laburnum watereri, Waterer Laburnum; same location as above; second growth from the base of an older plant.

Magnolia acuminata, Cucumber Tree; along south border of planting island at termination of Hedge Garden axis; a 15 foot tree.

**Magnolia tripetala,* Umbrella Magnolia; one along south border of planting island at termination of Hedge Garden axis; another better specimen in planting bordering meadow to the south; largest plant 12 feet tall and bushy.

Mahoberberis neuberti, (Intergeneric hybrid); south side of path through second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; two specimens, one 4 feet in height.

Mahonia aquifolium 'Donewell'; same location as above; low, spreading-branched plant.

Mahonia wagneri, Wagner Mahonia; same location as above; two 2½ foot specimens.

**Metasequoia glyptostroboides,* Dawn Redwood; along east edge of spruce planting north side of Frost Hill Loop, also bordering small meadow east of termination of Hedge Garden axis; six or eight specimens, the tallest 12 feet or so in height.

**Orixa japonica,* Japanese Orixa; along east edge of spruce planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; three small bushy specimens.

Parrotia persica, Persian Parrotia; among conifers east of spruce planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; a newly planted 3 foot specimen.

**Picea glauca conica,* Dwarf Alberta Spruce, southwest of termination of Hedge Garden axis; a fine group of plants up to 5½ feet tall.

Pieris japonica compacta, Compact Japanese Pieris; in specially prepared acid soil bed south side of Frost Hill Road opposite spruce planting; a bushy 1 foot plant.

Prunus amygdalus 'Halls Hardy', Halls Hardy Almond; bordering small meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus; several lanky plants to 10 feet tall.

Prunus laurocerasus schipkaensis, Schipka Common Laurelcherry; in specially prepared acid soil bed south side of Frost Hill Road, opposite spruce planting; a poor, winter injured plant.

Prunus persica rubro-plena, Double-red Flowering Peach; bordering small meadow east of Hedge Garden axis; two 4 foot specimens, 1 bushy, 1 poor.

**Prunus serrula;* among conifers east of spruce planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; a newly planted specimen of this extremely desirable cherry from W. China.

**Prunus serrulata* 'Double White', Double White Oriental Cherry; bordering long meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus, one plant north of path, the other south; the latter is a 10 foot bushy specimen.

**Prunus serrulata,* 'Kwanzan', Kwanzan Oriental Cherry; bordering long meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus, north side of path; a 6 foot erect branched tree.

Prunus yedoensis, Yoshino Cherry; bordering long meadow east of Hedge Garden terminus; newly planted.

**Pterostyrax hispida,* Epaulette-Tree; south side of path through second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; a small, newly planted specimen.

**Pyracantha coccinea lalandi,* Laland Firethorn; south edge of planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus bordering Frost Hill Loop; five bushy, heavily fruiting plants about 5 feet in height.

**Pyracantha coccinea lalandi* 'Vincent Strain', Vincent Firethorn; same location as above; two bushy 18 inch plants.

Pyracantha coccinea 'Kasan', Kasan Firethorn; same location as above; five small plants.

Pyracantha coccinea 'Minute Man', Minute Man Firethorn; same location as above; three 18 inch plants.

Rhododendron catawbiense, Catawba Rhododendron; along north edge of conifer planting southeast of Hedge Garden terminus; a single specimen 2¼ feet in height.

Rhododendron smirnowi, Smirnow Rhododendron; in specially prepared acid soil bed south side of Frost Hill Road opposite spruce planting; a vigorous small plant.

x*Rhododendron* 'Marjorie', Glenn Dale Hybrid; same location as above; a healthy appearing 2½ foot plant.

x*Rhododendron* 'Nadine'; a clone of a Gable F_1 hybrid; same location as above; a bushy specimen 1½ feet tall.

**Sophora japonica,* Japanese Pagoda Tree; along east edge of conifer planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; of the six plants of the Japanese Pagoda Tree on Frost Hill the single trunked 20 foot specimen in this location is the best.

Sorbus aria decaisneana, Decaisne Whitebeam Mountain Ash; south side of Frost Hill Road opposite second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; a small specimen.

**Sorbus aucuparia asplenifolia,* Cutleaf European Mountain Ash; same location as above; a 12 foot erect branched specimen.

**Sorbus aucuparia edulis,* Moravian European Mountain Ash; same location as above; a 12 foot erect branched specimen.

Styrax japonica, Japanese Snowbell; south edge of small meadow east of terminus of Hedge Garden axis; four small plants.

Taxus chinensis, Chinese Yew; south side of path through second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; three newly planted specimens.

Thuja orientalis, Oriental Arborvitae; along east edge of spruce planting north side of Frost Hill Loop; seven established plants.

Thuja plicata atrovirens, Darkgreen Giant Arborvitae; same location as above; two bushy specimens, one 2 feet tall, one 3½ feet.

Tilia euchlora, Crimean Linden; far east side of Frost Hill near southwest corner of Parking Area No. 23; a newly planted tree.

**Tilia tuan,* Tuan Linden; same location as above; a well established low headed tree.

**Torreya nucifera,* Japanese Torreya; south edge of small meadow, east of terminus of Hedge Garden axis; two plants, one a fine specimen 2½ feet tall and 4 feet wide; nearby in a sheltered bay among pines, is another smaller specimen.

**Ulmus pumila arborea,* Narrow Siberian Elm; far east side of Frost Hill interspersed among pines and other conifers; a number of specimens of various sizes, some as tall as 35 feet.

Viburnum acerifolium, Mapleleaf Viburnum; along south edge of small meadow east of second planting island; a small plant.

Viburnum dasyanthum; same location as above; a small plant.

Viburnum dilatatum, Linden Viburnum; same location as above; five plants, the largest 5 feet tall.

Viburnum wrighti, Wright Viburnum; same location as above; a bushy 5 foot plant.

Xanthoceras sorbifolium, Shinyleaf Yellowhorn; north side of Frost Hill Road opposite second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; a small plant.

Zelkova serrata, Japanese Zelkova; along south edge of second planting island east of Hedge Garden terminus; a promising 12 foot tree.

E. L. Kammerer

Note: Frost Hill Road, or Frost Hill Loop as it is herein referred to, is an alternate loop of Forest Road which encircles Frost Hill. It branches to the right from Forest Road about a third of a mile east of the East Entrance Gate Lodge, rejoining it near the Magnolia Collection.

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The Japanese Plum-Yew, *Cephalotaxus drupacea* Sieb. and Zucc., spreading branched shrub with yew-like foliage. Often arborescent in its native habitat.